



This is an official  
**DHEC Health Advisory**

Distributed via Health Alert Network  
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10245-DHA-10-13-11-R1Shig

## **Shigella Outbreak in Anderson County**

### **Summary**

This Health Advisory is to provide information about an outbreak of shigellosis among students, faculty and family members of students attending Honea Path Elementary School in Anderson County. You are receiving this advisory as a healthcare practitioner who may see students with acute GI illness that could be related to this outbreak. Information shared in this advisory is preliminary and may be subject to change as additional cases are reported.

- In the past 4 weeks, 3 confirmed cases of *Shigella* Sonnei have been identified among students attending Honea Path Elementary School. 26 additional persons are reported to have had acute onset of gastrointestinal (GI) illness similar to shigellosis since September 14. Most of these cases have been among students in grades K5 through 4<sup>th</sup>. Additional probable cases among faculty and household contacts of students are under investigation.
- The spectrum of shigellosis manifestations ranges from loose, watery stools without systemic symptoms to more severe presentations with fever, cramps, and bloody diarrhea.
- Although most cases of shigellosis are self-limited (48-72 hours) and do not require antimicrobial treatment, antimicrobial treatment is recommended for severe cases and for shortening duration of diarrhea and eradication of organism in stools.

Control measures to interrupt transmission in child care and school settings include:

- meticulous hand hygiene
- implementation of enhanced environmental hygiene in the facility and in students' homes.
- exclusion of individuals with diarrhea until resolved.

For students with a shigellosis diagnosis, or whose symptoms suggest *Shigella* infection associated with this outbreak, **school exclusion criteria** are:

- **Students in grades K3-K5:** Exclude until diarrhea is resolved AND either a) completion of 5 full days of treatment with an antibiotic shown to be active against the organism in antibiotic resistance testing, or b), if a course of antibiotics is not given, one negative stool culture. A medical note is required to return to school.
- **Students in Grades 1-12 who are not medically fragile:** Exclude until asymptomatic. A medical note is required to return to school.

As requested or needed, SC DHEC will provide parent letters for schools or child care facilities experiencing two or more cases of *Shigella* in a single grade or class.

Providers may opt to give a copy of the *Shigella* fact sheet to their patients (page 3 of this Advisory).

Shigellosis testing, via stool culture, is available through commercial laboratories. Isolates from positive specimens are to be submitted to the SC DHEC Bureau of Laboratories for confirmatory testing or genotyping.

For additional information, please contact the Region 1 Epi Team at (864) 260-4358.

## DHEC contact information for reportable diseases and reporting requirements

Reporting of **Shigella** is consistent with South Carolina Law requiring the reporting of diseases and conditions to your state or local public health department (State Law # 44-29-10 and Regulation # 61-20) as per the DHEC 2011 List of Reportable Conditions available at:  
<http://www.scdhec.gov/administration/library/CR-009025.pdf>

Federal HIPAA legislation allows disclosure of protected health information, without consent of the individual, to public health authorities to collect and receive such information for the purpose of preventing or controlling disease. (HIPAA 45 CFR §164.512).

### Regional Public Health Offices – 2011

**Mail or call reports to the Epidemiology Office in each Public Health Region.**

#### **Region 1**

##### **Anderson, Oconee**

220 McGee Road  
 Anderson, SC 29625  
 Phone: (864) 260-4358  
 Fax: (864) 260-5623  
 Nights / Weekends: 1-866-298-4442

##### **Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Saluda**

1736 S. Main Street  
 Greenwood, SC 29646  
 Phone: 1-888-218-5475  
 Fax: (864) 942-3690  
 Nights / Weekends: 1-800-420-1915

#### **Region 2**

##### **Greenville, Pickens**

PO Box 2507  
 200 University Ridge  
 Greenville, SC 29602-2507  
 Phone: (864) 282-4139  
 Fax: (864) 282-4373  
 Nights / Weekends: (864) 809-3825

##### **Cherokee, Spartanburg, Union**

PO Box 4217  
 151 E. Wood Street  
 Spartanburg, SC 29305-4217  
 Phone: (864) 596-2227, x- 210  
 Fax: (864) 596-3443  
 Nights / Weekends: (864) 809-3825

#### **Region 3**

##### **Chester, Lancaster, York**

PO Box 817  
 1833 Pageland Highway  
 Lancaster, SC 29720  
 Phone: (803) 286-9948  
 Fax: (803) 286-5418  
 Nights / Weekends: 1-866-867-3886

#### **Region 3 (continued)**

##### **Fairfield, Lexington, Newberry, Richland**

2000 Hampton Street  
 Columbia, SC 29204  
 Phone: (803) 576-2749  
 Fax: (803) 576-2993  
 Nights / Weekends: 1-888-554-9915

#### **Region 4**

##### **Clarendon, Kershaw, Lee, Sumter**

PO Box 1628  
 105 North Magnolia Street  
 Sumter, SC 29150  
 Phone: (803) 773-5511  
 Fax: (803) 775-9941  
 Nights/Weekends: (803) 458-1847

##### **Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Marlboro, Marion**

145 E. Cheves Street  
 Florence, SC 29506  
 Phone: (843) 661-4830  
 Fax: (843) 661-4859  
 Nights / Weekends: (843) 601-7051

#### **Region 5**

##### **Bamberg, Calhoun, Orangeburg**

PO Box 1126  
 1550 Carolina Avenue  
 Orangeburg, SC 29116  
 Phone: (803) 533-7199  
 Fax: (803) 533-7134  
 Nights / Weekends: (803) 516-5166

##### **Aiken, Allendale, Barnwell**

1680 Richland Avenue, W. Suite 40  
 Aiken, SC 29801  
 Phone: (803) 642-1618  
 Fax: (803) 643-8386  
 Nights / Weekends: 1-800-614-1519

#### **Region 6**

##### **Georgetown, Horry, Williamsburg**

1931 Industrial Park Road  
 Conway, SC 29526-5482  
 Phone: (843) 915-8804  
 Fax: (843) 365-0085  
 Nights / Weekends: (843) 381-6710

#### **Region 7**

##### **Berkeley, Charleston, Dorchester**

4050 Bridge View Drive, Suite 600  
 N. Charleston, SC 29405  
 Phone: (843) 953-0047  
 Fax: (843) 953-0051  
 Nights / Weekends: (843) 219-8470

#### **Region 8**

##### **Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton, Jasper**

219 S. Lemacks Street  
 Walterboro, SC 29488  
 Phone: (843) 525-5910  
 Fax: (843) 549-6845  
 Nights / Weekends: 1-843-441-1091

#### **DHEC Bureau of Disease Control**

##### **Division of Acute Disease Epidemiology**

1751 Calhoun Street  
 Box 101106  
 Columbia, SC 29211  
 Phone: (803) 898-0861  
 Fax: (803) 898-0897  
 Nights / Weekends: 1-888-847-0902



[www.scdhec.gov](http://www.scdhec.gov)

Categories of Health Alert messages:

#### **Health Alert**

Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

#### **Health Advisory**

Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

#### **Health Update**

Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

# Shigellosis

Shigellosis is an infection of the intestines caused by a bacterium called *Shigella*.

It causes symptoms such as:

- Diarrhea (sometimes with blood or mucus)
- Stomach cramps
- Fever
- Nausea or vomiting

Symptoms may occur from 1 to 7 days after exposure, but usually occur within 1 to 3 days. Symptoms last an average of 4 to 7 days. Some infected people, especially adults, may not show any symptoms.

Shigellosis is most common in young children. Anyone can get shigellosis. Those who may be at greater risk include children in child care centers and their parents, foreign travelers to certain countries, and institutionalized people.

People get shigellosis from other people. *Shigella* is found in the feces (stool) of infected persons. *Shigella* may be spread to others by the stool of infected persons while they are sick and possibly for up to 4 weeks after they feel better. Infected people who do not show any symptoms of shigellosis may also spread *Shigella* through their stool for several weeks. The germ is spread to other people either by direct contact with an infected person's stool or by eating or drinking contaminated food or water.

Handwashing is the most important way to prevent infection.

Wash hands with soap and water:

- After using the toilet,
- After changing diapers,
- After touching any stool-soiled material,
- Before handling food or drink,
- Before eating

Help young children to wash their hands

See your doctor if you have diarrhea or possible shigellosis

- Most people recover from Shigellosis on their own. Some may require fluids or antibiotics.
- Antidiarrheal agents such as Imodium or Lomotil are likely to make the illness worse and should be avoided.
- Food handlers, health care and child care workers, children in child care, or persons in the family of such people who have Shigellosis should contact their local health department to get specific recommendations.

